

## Political Comment.

### The Postal Deficit.

President Taft's message, showing that the postoffice lost \$25,000,000 a year on second class mail and \$25,000,000 a year on rural free delivery, besides various small losses, such as \$300,000 on congressional franking, \$2,500,000 on the free handling of official mail, and \$2,000,000 on third class mail, has attracted a great deal of attention. The profits on letter mail were so great that the total net deficit of the Postoffice Department was only \$17,000,000 in the last fiscal year. Nevertheless, it is generally admitted that it is not good business permanently to take great losses on any special classes of mail matter.

The rural free delivery comes in for little criticism because it is in the period of development, and it is very probable that what we spend on it now will be won back in the end. With the second class mail the case is different. The President stated that, while the government was paid only one cent a pound for handling this matter, the cost to the government was more than nine cents a pound, and that while the average haul of newspapers was 291 miles, that of magazines was 1,049 miles. He recommended a higher rate of postage on magazines because of their longer haul.

This recommendation brought forth a storm from some of the magazines. "The Outlook," for example, takes 9 cents a pound and the government on second class matter, assumes the 9 cents is wholly paid to the railroads for transportation, thus disregarding administrative expenses, and makes a strong case for revision of the rates paid the railroads. If a 200-pound passenger, given a seat and free elbow room in a passenger car, can be carried a thousand miles from New York to Chicago for \$18, or 9 cents a pound, surely, it argues, 9 cents is extortion for moving magazines. It quotes an express company rate of \$2.50 a hundred, or 2 1/2 cents a pound from New York to Chicago, as further evidence of what the price should be.

Now, however, Postmaster General Hitchcock's annual report is out, giving figures in greater detail. It appears from this that the transportation cost proper of magazines for an average 1,049 miles is something over 6 cents a pound, while the newspaper cost is under 2 cents a pound, these figures of course excluding the other expenses chargeable to the second class mail, which united bring the total cost above 9 cents.

The Outlook's case against the prices the government pays the railroads is, therefore, not so strong as it was made out to be at the start, but it is strong enough. It would indicate that whatever steps the government takes for reducing the postoffice deficit, one of the first should be a renewed investigation of the contract for hauling the mails.—Chicago Record-Herald.

### The War in Nicaragua.

They seem to have been having a real war down in Nicaragua, and not one of those comic opera revolutions in which manifestos and pronouncements are the ammunition used. The cable accounts of the final battle in which the greater part of Zelaya's soldiers were taken prisoners, show that the fighting was fierce, and the strategy of no mean order. If the accounts are truthful, as it seems probable they are, the Zelaya regime is at an end and the people of Nicaragua are rid forever not only of that graceless tyrant, but of the puppet, Jose Madriz, whom he set up in his place. The disaster to the government's army is so overwhelming that it is difficult to see how Madriz could possibly hold out against Estrada's victorious soldiers. The probability is that Madriz will gladly surrender. The Madrizs knew Zelaya only too well, and when fear of his vengeance is gone they will welcome a new deal.

It is fortunate, indeed, that the United States has not been obliged to use any hand in the fighting. We have given moral support to the revolutionaries, it is true, and we have forced the retirement of the unseemable Zelaya. But the fighting for the freedom of the Republic has been done by Nicaraguans. And now that the Zelayists have been roundly trounced by their countrymen, the American Red Cross Society will hasten to the aid of the unfortunate who have been captured. Many of them are mere boys and their condition is described as pitiable. It is probable that most of them have but the vaguest idea of what the rumpus is all about. Ordered to fight, they have fought.

That is usually the case in war. The free and strategic play the great game, as they would chess, pushing forward a piece here, retreating another there, sacrificing a third for the sake of position or to thwart the enemy's advance. The soldiers are mere pawns, whose lives are valuable only to be given up, and whose understanding of the conflict is of the most shadowy.

Zelaya has used every endeavor to create feeling against the United States, which he has described as a powerful and unscrupulous foreigner seeking to enslave the republic. The succor sent to the unfortunate of his ragged army will go far toward removing that impression. We have no other interest in Nicaragua than to see a free and stable government of its own citizens established. We have enough troubles of our own, without taking on any sort of protectorate over the volatile and excitable Central Americans.—Minneapolis Journal.

### Inhaling Water.

Undoubtedly the majority of bathers who are drowned meet their deaths from cramp. Cramp is liable to seize anybody at any moment, and when it comes in deep water few swimmers have sufficient presence of mind to turn on their backs and wait quietly until the attack has departed. So they go under. But there is another danger quite as imminent as cramp, though it is probably less known. This is water inhalation. A swimmer or even a wader is always liable to inhale spray through his nostrils, which, passing through the pharynx and behind the epiglottis or windpipe guard, gets into the windpipe and causes death. As one would expect, water inhalation is almost wholly confined to the sea and very rarely occurs in fresh water. All the same, it may happen anywhere.

### A GOOD EXAMPLE.

The proposal to cut down the cost of the national government the coming fiscal year some \$100,000,000 below that which has and will be expended the present fiscal year gives general satisfaction. For years the cost of keeping afloat the affairs of the nation has shown pronounced and steady advance and every attempt at retrenchment has been ruthlessly pushed aside.

Now it looks as if a reduction in the cost of maintenance would have a better show. President Taft is anxious to have the Federal budget lightened; so is a certain number of Senators and representatives; but the larger membership refrains from speaking on the subject as bills calling for large sums from the nation's treasury, to be expended in the various constituencies, forbid its champions from making a show down of hands.

The savings begin with the Navy Department, which is lopped off \$28,000,000, the Treasury, \$12,000,000; War, \$36,000,000; Postoffice, \$5,000,000. This is nearly half the reduction. But the knife runs along the whole gamut of expenditures and only in comparative few cases is the old rate retained. In fewer still are the figures put above those of the present year.

To say nothing of the saving in dollars and cents by the lessening of taxes the moral effect would be considerable in inducing England and Germany to let up on the mad race for supremacy on the water. The subjects of these monarchies are maddened on account of the heavy and increasing payments for the national defense and with slight prospect of any change in this policy. With the United States curtailing the cost of army and navy this would be a strong lever in the hands of the people on the other side of the Atlantic to combat the governments which are committed to the opposite line of action. We set or propose to set, the example of lessening expenditures for the war of the sea and economy and for half of peace between the nations. It deserves emulation, but we fear those most in need of it will not profit by it. It is a pity.—Utica Globe.

**Looking to the Supreme Court.**  
There is to be no effort on the part of the Standard Oil Company to secure an amendment of the Sherman anti-trust law. We shall await the verdict of the Supreme Court before we take any steps looking toward either reorganization or a new statement of our case to the public. These are the words of Mortimer F. Elliott, the chief counsel for the Standard. They are sensible words.

On the particular points involved in the case against the Standard the country has had no final verdict. Not until the Supreme Court speaks can either the lawyers or the public know the law on these issues. It would be a waste of time to work to amend the anti-trust act until the exact scope of the act is made plain. All this is so elementary that the Standard's position in regard to amendment will commend itself to the country. It is to the interest of the Standard as well as of the government to use their influence to hasten a final ruling by the higher tribunal.

Attempts are to be made to alter the Sherman act at many points and in many ways in the session which will soon begin. Congress should go slow in dealing with this statute. This law was purposely made broad. It was intended to cover all sorts of operations which establish monopoly or hamper interstate trade. Its framers aimed to prevent oppression of the people by industrial, commercial, transportation, labor and all other kinds of combines. So far as the statute has been enforced it has served its purpose well. It has dissolved several trusts, has opened some banking companies, and has acted as a deterrent against other operations in this direction. The particular vices which were hit by the decision of the United States Circuit Court in the Standard case will be averted hereafter, for the near future, at least. A law along the general lines of the Sherman act is required. Probably that act, in certain points, could be improved. Let us find out, however, just what the act does, or what it ought to do, before we attempt to strengthen it or modify it.—Minneapolis Journal.

**Reorganizing the Navy.**  
Secretary Meyer has taken up the work of naval reorganization. It is said in some of the dispatches that by doing so he is forestalling Congressional action in that direction. It is but common sense to reorganize if the matter were left to Congress. It is doubtful if anything ever would be done. There are naval officers interested in the maintenance of the existing system who would block legislation. An energetic and capable secretary is the only reform agent who can be depended on.

That is usually the case in war. The free and strategic play the great game, as they would chess, pushing forward a piece here, retreating another there, sacrificing a third for the sake of position or to thwart the enemy's advance. The soldiers are mere pawns, whose lives are valuable only to be given up, and whose understanding of the conflict is of the most shadowy.

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**He Owes Up.**  
"Own up, now. Who's the head of your family?"  
"My wife used to be," admitted Mr. Enneke. "But since my daughters are grown up we have a commission form of government."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

**Exceedingly Rapid.**  
"Were the colors fast on the new goods you bought?"  
"Fast? My dear, they fairly ran into one another, they were so fast."—Baltimore American.

**Increase of Crime in London.**  
The figures of the London police courts show a very decided increase during recent years in serious crime.



In the days of the Georges smuggling was so popular a calling in England and the smuggler so popular a gentleman even with some of the landed gentry, in whose ancient castles and mansions special chimney recesses have been found especially constructed to shield from detection the imported brands which had slipped into the country without reporting to the king's customs officers, that even the sedate and high-minded Scotchman, Adam Smith, classified the contraband traffic as a trade of great importance.

Eighteenth century had reached a high degree of perfection is shown in the laws aimed at those engaged in the practice, writes H. B. Chamberlain, in the Chicago Record-Herald. Vessels carrying undeclared goods were forfeitable, as were the goods; high inducements were offered to informers who would betray their fellow workers. Persons mistaking the law for smugglers were entitled to a reward of \$50; informers guilty of sordid, selfish treachery were given the same amount for each person convicted on their testimony and the informers were granted immunity. Smugglers were whipped and transported to the plantations in 1746, according to the contraband goods was made punishable by death as a felony. As the offenses multiplied and the popularity of the smugglers made it difficult to capture them, counties were made liable for their deeds.

But the smuggler of that period is no longer extant. Like the Indian scout, the buffalo and the desperado of the Western plains, he has been crowded out by a complicated civilization. He could flourish only in a thinly populated country, with a coast offering to him inlets and harbors where he could in safety land his cargo. In these days of the wireless and populous cities and great trans-Atlantic steamers he must assume another form and pursue different methods.

Cunning rather than strength or knowledge of waves and winds is the requisite qualification of the modern smuggler. Hence women are as well able to engage in it as men, and, indeed, the facts prove that they seem to have an especial aptitude in this line. The false-bottomed trunk is so old a device that the unsophisticated wonder why anyone should trust to it. For surely every inspector knows of this contrivance for concealing goods. But, as has been shown by the wholesale dismissal of employees from the customs service in New York, inspectors have not been conspicuously efficient in guarding the interests of their country.

In these days smuggling on a large scale invariably produces the suspicion that there has been collusion with the government officials. This was shown to be true in a case at New York. Early in November a member of a large importing firm, was sentenced to a year in prison and to pay a fine of \$5,000 for defrauding this government of duties by misstating the weight of cheese imported. To carry out this fraud it was necessary for the government weigher to falsify his report to fit the figures of the false invoice submitted by the exporter from Europe. Four government weighers turned state's evidence and told how this had been done, and evidence gathered from the books and records of purchasers corroborated the stories of these informers, who were offered immunity from prosecution and retained in the customs service. The culprit picked up in the cars before we were confined to this box. You see, we used to walk through the cars for the fares, and if there was an umbrella or grip, anything of that sort, left in one of the seats was a good chance of seeing it and restoring it to the owner. Now we can't do that. We have hardly any chance at all to pick up anything left on the car."

"But the passengers turn in some of the things they find, don't they?" I asked.

There was a great and sad knowledge of human nature in the conductor's smile.

"Do they? Not much," he said. "Ask the man who has charge of lost articles over at the De Baliviere station. He'll tell you that we handle almost nothing there now, whereas we restored quantities of stuff to the owners under the pay-hundred-dollar system."

"My eye, but what thieves we are!"

"Why, I used to pick up an umbrella or two on my car every day and now there is not one handed over to me in seven days," he resumed.

Here, then, is a valid objection to the courts and go on earning a living protected from ruin and happy in the knowledge that the people's courts could defend them.

How could any of us receive protection from law-breakers unless the law has power to, and do punish such men.

The court is placed in position where it must do one thing or the other—punish men who persist in defying its peace orders or go out of service, let anarchy reign and the more powerful destroy the weaker.

Peaceable citizens sustain the courts, the police, the law, whereas thieves, forgers, burglars, crooks of all kinds and violent members of labor unions, hate them and threaten violence if their members are punished for breaking the law. They want the courts to let them go free and at the same time demand punishment for other men "outside de union" when they break the law. They want the courts to refer to "violent" members of labor unions. The great majority of the "unheard" union men are peaceable, upright citizens. The noisy, law-breaking few carry the leaders of the great Labor Trust know how to mass this kind of men.

## Smugglers and Smuggling

naughty prank he must have inadvertently threatened her, for once when he was passing the customs house this parrot cried out: "Oh, Polli, when you are dead I shall stuff you with laces." And so it was discovered that all his birds were thus stuffed.

Last month two fashionable dress makers of Boston were arrested charged with smuggling women's apparel from France. The customs officials say this is the beginning of the exposure of one of the cleverest and boldest smuggling conspiracies ever hatched to slip valuable imports into this country. The method followed was to load trunks unexamined on board the ship with the understanding that they would go back to Europe with their owners unopened. Then the ship after the customs house officials had inspected the other baggage. That a widespread rottenness has infected the customs service at New York is shown in the show-up recently given by Collector Loeb. It may be that inspectors, frightened by the discharge of their fellows, may now give honest attention to their work. But a high and complicated tariff offers a temptation to smuggling which is difficult to offset.

### The Mess in the Oven.

"How came such a greasy mess in the oven?" said a fidgety old spinster to her maid of all work.

"The maid—Wurried, is it, ma'am? I'll have you know, Mrs. Pa-acker, I've wurried fr' every family I ever lived with!"—Chicago Tribune.

### Where Peeps Won Fame.

"Who was the fellow Peeps, and what is his claim to fame?"

"His claim to fame is well founded, my friend. He's the man who kept a Gory for more than a year!"—Kansas City Journal.

### Apples as Omens.

In parts of England many quaint superstitions still center round the apple. Apples hung on strings and twirled before the fire are said to fall off in the order that the marriages of the various owners will proceed. An apple taken before a looking glass is supposed to give a view of the future of a husband, who will be seen peeping over milady's shoulder. Peel safely taken from an apple, tossed three times round the head and thrown to the ground unbroken forms the first letter of a future lover's name. A more recent, though hardly more aerial custom necessitates a bowl of water in which are floating a number of apples. Mothers must drop forks into the bowl from a distance of about four feet. If the fork pierces an apple the feast is believed to protect the performers' children from catching cold.—London Star.

### The Use of Barges in the Coastwise Trade is Increasing.

Use of barges in the coastwise trade is increasing enormously.

### Notes Absence of Honesty.

Few Articles Forgotten in Cars Are Turned in by Passengers.

The man in the rabbit hutch was talking.

"It's wonderful what a difference the pay-as-you-enter makes with lost articles," he said. "I guess we turn in about one-tenth the stuff we used to pick up in the cars before we were confined to this box. You see, we used to walk through the cars for the fares, and if there was an umbrella or grip, anything of that sort, left in one of the seats was a good chance of seeing it and restoring it to the owner. Now we can't do that. We have hardly any chance at all to pick up anything left on the car."

### Spurious Self-Denial.

When Mr. D., known to be miserly, but not believed to be a miser, was approached delicately for a contribution to the organ fund, he shook his head courteously, but with an air of finality.

"Charity," he said, "is a pleasure one must do without."

### Little Margie's Spot.

Little Margie's father had a bald spot. While kissing him at bedtime one evening she said:

"Stoop down, papa. I want to kiss you on the head where the living shows."

### Many a Woman who is Gentle with other people is rough with her husband.

Fortunately, most of the weather that is predicted doesn't develop.

The woman who is suspicious of all other women is apt to be suspected.

### One Last Chance.

She was shopping. She drifted into the place where they sell blankets. Roll after roll was displayed and spread out before her. Still, she listlessly asked for more. Finally, with a look of surprise, she remarked, as she rose:

"Oh, well; I don't really mean to buy any. I was only looking for a friend."

"Play waltz a moment, ma'am. This is the attendant, surely, 'there's is one more blanket on the shelf. Perhaps your friend is that."—Titt-Bits.

### Physicians in Japan.

Medical students in Japan must have had eleven or twelve years of preliminary training in the lower schools. No one may practice medicine who has been convicted of a crime. All physicians for the first ten years during which they follow their calling must keep full written records of all their cases, and they must not issue boastful advertisements or claim the exclusive right to any healing invention with a secret formula.

Germany's four super-Dreadnoughts will each have a crew of 1,000 men.

### Not Hanging Out Statistics.

The Misus—Narah, how many families have you ever worked for?

The Maid—Wurried, is it, ma'am? I'll have you know, Mrs. Pa-acker, I've wurried fr' every family I ever lived with!"—Chicago Tribune.

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### Endlessly Gloating.

"You've made money by carrying a peddler's pack and selling notions from it all day long, and you're gloating over it!"

"I have."

"What's the secret?"

"It all depends on the way you use your voice. Always put on the soft peddle."

### His Status.

"Your husband doesn't seem to take a very active part in politics," observed the caller.

"No," said Mrs. Lapsling. "He doesn't believe in going to extremes in anything; he's a conservator."

### A Sporting Chance.

"I'll teach you to play at pitch and toss!" shouted the enraged father.

"I'll flog you for an hour, I will!"

"Father," instantly said the incorrigible, as he balanced a penny on his thumb and finger, "I'll toss you to make it two hours or nothing!"—Cassell's Journal.

### Tariffed.

Rivers (who is writing an article on imports)—Say, Brooks, what's the rate on automobiles?

Brooks—In the suburb where I live it's not less than forty miles an hour.

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### Possible Use for Him.

"No, sir," said the recruiting officer; "I'm sorry to say your boy won't do at all for the navy. Very sorry. You are an old offender."

"He's cross eyed."

"Yes, I know that, but his eyes are crossed at such a peculiar angle that I thought you might be able to use him as a range finder."—Chicago Tribune.

### Standardizing His Gratitude.

Wareham Long—What'd you say of Rockefeller wuz to give ye a million dollars?

Tufford Knutt—Tanks! — Chicago Tribune.

### Overconfidence.

"What is the title of this picture?" inquired the connoisseur.

"The Night Express Leaving on Time," said the proud owner of the painting.

"May I ask what it cost you?"

"I paid \$150 for it."

"Well, you got left."

### Looked Like a Dog.

"This," remarked Mr. Cane, "is my photograph with my two French poodles. You recognize me, eh?"

"No difference," said Miss Lapsling. "You are the one with the hat on, are you not?"

### When Protection is Needed.

"Do you regard protection as a business necessity?" demanded the inquisitive person.

"A necessity," responded the other. "Say, you try running a 'speakeasy' in this town without it and see where you land."—Philadelphia Ledger.

### Where is Worked.

"While we were on my honeymoon I always spoke French to my husband so that no one should understand us."

"So you went to France, did you?"—Fleegende Blaetter.

### English Coffee.

An extract from the London Chronicle proves that the English can take a joke in a sportsmanlike way.

The American opinion of coffee as understood in the English home is not high, and how the coffee of the English lodgings is esteemed may be understood from the following traveler's tale:

It was his first morning in London "apartments," and his landlady came up with the breakfast, and as she set down his coffee cup she opened a slight conversation.

"It looks like rain," she said.

"I don't," agreed the American, "and it doesn't even smell unlike it."

### Natural Mistake.

Caller—What I like about your flat is its fine large balcony.

Mrs. Wrenster—I beg your pardon but—er—you've been looking at the bedroom.—Chicago Tribune.

### The Twelve Principal Ports of the United States alone show a value of over \$5,000,000,000 at last reports.

### Not the Only One.

The Court—Ephraim, this is the fourth or fifth time you have been up before me for the navy. You are an old offender.

Uncle Ephraim—Yes, sub; it's about as tough a job to reform me as it is to Standard Oil company.—Chicago Tribune.

### A High Course.

He—Do you believe in the higher education for girls?

She—Oh, my, yes; I'm taking lessons in aviation already.—Boston Herald.

### Philosophic.

The Grumbler—Seems to me it's about time something was coming my way.

The Philosopher—Be thankful, my friend, lest the something which doesn't come your way is something you deserve.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### Rough on Pop.

"Mamma, I don't understand some of these words. What's the difference between a dialogue and a monologue?"

"No difference," said Mr. J. "Your father is taking any part in the conversation."

### Not Properly Coached.

Mrs. Tucker—Having served the others for—Well, Tommy, what part of the chicken will you have?

Tommy—Why, paw, you know I always take the back when there's company.

### Not an Asset.

Crusty Artist—That picture gives you a better impression, madam, if you look at it from a proper distance.

Mrs. Chillon-Kearney—I hardly think Mrs. Datsend can only—er—lead enchantment, you know.

### A Lesson for the Old.

"I hear, my boy, that you have lately told your mother several falsehoods. This grieves me to the heart. Always tell the truth, even though it may bring suffering upon you. Will you promise me?"

"Yes, father."

"Very well. Now go and see who is knocking at the door. If it's the collector, say I'm not at home."—Detroit News-Tribune.

### Thought He Had.

Watt Smatter—Bought your Christmas presents yet?

O. Heezel Wright—Mine? I think I have, at last—by proxy. My wife told me in which store she wanted just one more dollar to buy one, two little articles she had overlooked.

### His Excuse.

Sunday School Teacher—Tommy, I saw you running the lawnmower this morning. Do you think it was right for you to do that?

Tommy Tucker—Yes'm. It kept the grass from growin' on Sunday.

## Don't Weep At The Ice House.

Some people swell up on "emotion" brewed from absolute untruth.

It's an old trick of the leaders of the Labor Trust to twist